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# SCIENCE

FRIDAY, MAY 27, 1910

CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL HYGIENE<sup>1</sup>

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## I. THE COMMUNITY

THE need of constructive work in medicine applies to the community as well as to the individual. The steady growth of American cities—in fact, of the cities of the world—indicates that we are to become in the not far distant future predominantly a city people. The accompanying diagram (A) shows how the rural population has been steadily falling and the urban population steadily rising since 1880 in all five census divisions of the United States. In Massachusetts, during the same period, there has been an absolute decrease of some thirty thousand in the rural population, while the urban population has increased by over one million. This is shown in graphic form in diagram B. The remarkable growth of the cities appears more graphically still in the diagram (C) showing the growth in the urban proportion of the population during the past eleven decades.

The causes of this steady urbanization of our kind are not far to seek. Three sets of causes may be read by him who runs. First is the *economic* cause. Owing to the use of machinery, an ever smaller fraction of our people can be engaged in the production of enough raw material to supply the needs of the world. To produce more than this is to invite economic disaster. Hence a progressively large fraction of the people will be engaged in

<sup>1</sup>An address delivered at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York City, April 14, 1909, in the course of Columbia University lectures on sanitary science and public health.